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THE GARDEN CALENDAR

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A radio discussion by W. R. Beattie, Bureau of Plant Industry, delivered in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, broadcast by a network of 50 associate NBC radio stations, Tuesday, November 26, 1935.

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Hello folks. An Italian fruit vendor who had trouble with his customers pinching the fruit to see if it was ripe, placed a sign on his fruitstand which read, "If you musta pincha de fruit, then pincha de cocoanut."

When you folks go to market today or tomorrow to purchase your supplies for Thanksgiving you may not have to pinch or feel of the pears or other fruits to see if they are ripe because the railroads and terminal companies in most of the large cities have provided ripening rooms in which the fruit is brought to just the proper stage of ripeness before it is offered for sale. Take Bosc pears for example, which have to be picked fairly green in order to stand transportation, if sold on their arrival at the markets they never acquire the highest flavor and best consistency. In order to give these pears the best flavor they are held in ripening rooms for 3 to 6 days. The air in these rooms is conditioned as to moisture content and the temperature is held between 60 and 70 degrees. When the consumer buys these pears and takes them home they are in prime condition for eating and there is no occasion for pinching the fruit to see if it is ripe.

Better storage and handling methods are being worked out for all of our perishable foods, especially the fruits and vegetables. Take the recent developments in the frozen storage of fruits and vegetables for example. Years ago we thought that if most of our fruits and vegetables became frozen they were ruined, but nowadays we freeze strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, cherries, peaches, beans, peas, spinach and even sweet corn and keep them frozen until we want them for use during the winter or next spring before the fresh products are available. This has come about partly as the result of investigations made by the workers in the Department of Agriculture and the Colleges and Experiment Stations cooperating with the transportation and storage companies.

You folks who live on northern farms will go to your storage cellars for most of your supplies for the thanksgiving dinner while many of you southern folks will go right out into your gardens and gather the fresh vegetables. It is the folks who live in cities and especially those who live in apartments that benefit most by the improvements that have been wrought in the methods of transporting and storing perishable foods. Today our markets are overflowing with an abundance of fresh fruits and vegetables that are shipped from all parts of the country. Tender string beans, beautiful bunched carrots, young tender beets, fresh peas in the pod, fresh lima beans, spinach, cabbage, radishes, celery and what not. Even corn on the cob and red-ripe tomatoes.

And now I suppose Miss Van Deman has all of the cooks primed as to which is the best kind of turkey dressing, the moist kind or the dry kind, and just how hot the oven should be for the proper roasting of the thanksgiving bird, and how to cook the cranberries and just how to season the pumpkin pie. I think I had better stop for the mere mention of all those good things to eat makes me hungry. It is nice though to talk about the many good things to eat and I always sort of envy

Miss Van Deman in her work in the Bureau of Home Economics, always trying to find better ways of preparing food and serving it, always looking for new ways to make housework easier and to improve living conditions in the American Home. My work with the fruits, the vegetables and the flowers is a sort of companion work to that of Miss Van Deman and her associates in the Bureau of Home Economics. There is always something new, something to be tried out.

Thursday will be Thanksgiving and for many of us a sort of Harvest-Home festival when we all get together to celebrate the fact that we have come through another year safe and sound and that the wolf is not doing any howling at our doors. Today I want to extend my greetings to every member of the Farm and Home Hour family and to say that I have nothing for which I am more thankful than this invisible but friendly association with you over the radio. I am sure that Mr. Salisbury and Miss Van Deman will join with me in thanking you one and all for the many messages of encouragement and cheer that you have sent us during the years that we have been on the Farm and Home Hour and we most sincerely hope that this friendship of the air may continue. Thank you and a pleasant Thanksgiving.

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